

MINUTES OF THE
MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
CENSUS SURVEY OVERSIGHT SUBCOMMITTEE

October 18, 2005
MAG Office
302 North First Avenue
Phoenix, Arizona

MEMBERS ATTENDING

George Pettit, Gilbert, Chair
**Pier Simeri for David Fitzhugh, Avondale
Brian Rose, Buckeye
*Gary Neiss, Carefree
*Usama Abujbarah, Cave Creek
**Dave Bigos for Marian Norris Stanley,
Chandler
*Joanne Garrett, El Mirage
*Kate Zanon, Fountain Hills
*Beverly Turner, Gila Bend
*Tina Notah-Enas, Gila River Indian Community
*Miryam Gutier-Brown, Glendale
Jerene Watson, Goodyear
**Gary Smith, Guadalupe
Sonny Culbreth, Litchfield Park

Richard Bohan, Maricopa County
**Mariano Reyes for Ellen Pence, Mesa
Duncan Miller, Paradise Valley
Prisila Ferreira, Peoria
Norris Nordvold, Phoenix
Shawny Ekadis, Queen Creek
*Bryan Meyer, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian
Community
**Peggy Carpenter, Scottsdale
Stephanie Wilson for Sintra Hoffman, Surprise
**Amber Wakeman, Tempe
*Chris Hagen, Tolleson
*Matthew Moric, Wickenburg
Mark Fooks, Youngtown

*Members neither present nor represented by proxy.

OTHERS PRESENT

**Dawn Nelson, Census Bureau
**Richard Ning, Census Bureau
Jay Occhiogrosso, Census Bureau
Heidi Pahl, MAG

Harry Wolfe, MAG
Kelly Taft, MAG
Tom Remes, MAG
Craig Chenery, MAG
Karen Flores, Peoria

**Participated via telephone conference call.

✓ Participated via videoconference.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:35 a.m. by Chairman George Pettit. Voting members, Gary Smith, Peggy Carpenter, Amber Wakeman and proxies Pier Simeri, David Bigos and Mariano Reyes attended via audio conference. All members introduced themselves.

2. Call to the Audience

No comments were made by the audience.

3. Approval of September 20, 2005 Meeting Minutes and Reconsideration of August 16, 2005 Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Mark Fooks seconded by Norris Nordvold to amend the August 16, 2005 meeting minutes to reflect that Jerene Watson, city of Goodyear, attended via audio conference. It was moved by Mark Fooks seconded by Sonny Culbreth and unanimously recommended to approve the September 20, 2005 meeting minutes.

4. Timeline and Budget

Heidi Pahl said that with the full count of population in group quarters and outdoor locations complete and the mail questionnaire returns nearing completion, Census enumerators are focusing on follow-up activities. She said the Census Bureau began telephone follow-up October 6 and will continue to November 6. She noted that personal visit follow-up began in September and should be completed by the beginning of December, 2005. Survey results will be received in spring 2006.

Heidi Pahl mentioned that Al Tupek, Acting Associate Director for Demographic Programs at the U.S. Census Bureau, videoconferenced to the October 12th MAG Management Committee meeting to discuss the costs for the 2005 Census Survey and teamwork between the Census Bureau, MAG and the member agencies.

Heidi Pahl explained that the cost for the 2005 Census Survey and count of population in group quarters has been estimated at \$7.7 million. She said that the help and support of MAG member agencies, especially pertaining to creating address files for Census Bureau use, helped to keep initial cost increases down. She stated that a couple of weeks ago, staff learned of other cost increases. Through teamwork between Census and MAG staff, the Census Bureau reevaluated the cost estimate, and expressed confidence that the 2005 Census Survey could be conducted within the original cost estimate of \$7.7 million.

Heidi Pahl noted that MAG staff is meeting with the Census Bureau twice a week to discuss progress to date and address any issues that may arise. She noted that the Census Bureau stated that telephone follow-up activities are much less expensive than personal visits, and staff have made a concerted effort to obtain more phone numbers for households that did not return the questionnaire. In addition, the Bureau is being as efficient as possible when conducting personal visits to enhance cost-effectiveness.

Heidi Pahl said that to date, \$6,862,000 has been paid to the Census Bureau and about \$4.8 million has been expended. The final costs will be based upon expenses actually incurred by the Census Bureau and will be determined in 2006.

5. Undeliverable As Addressed (UAA) Analysis

Heidi Pahl showed two pie charts explaining the Census Bureau's original estimate and revised estimate. She said that to come up with their original cost estimate, they made some assumptions. They assumed, 50 percent of the 2005 Census Surveys would be completed and returned via mail, 25 percent of the surveys would be completed by telephone interview and the remaining 25 percent of the surveys would be completed by personal visits. She explained that since personal visits are the most costly way to collect this information, to keep costs down MAG's goal is to get more questionnaires returned via mail and a good telephone match rate to the addresses.

Heidi Pahl explained the revised Census questionnaire estimate. She said the Census Bureau is still aiming for 50 percent of the surveys to be completed and returned via mail, 11 percent to be completed by telephone interview, 39 percent completed via personal visit. She noted there were a number of questionnaires that were returned by the post office with a marking of undeliverable as addressed (UAA). UAAs are questionnaires that have been returned because the unit was vacant, not a correct address, or had no mail receptacle. The Census Bureau estimated that about a third of the UAAs were vacant, and they will not be visiting two-thirds of the vacant units. She noted that they will visit a sub-sample of the other UAAs and the households who did not respond via mail or telephone. She concluded by stating that this does not jeopardize the integrity of the sample.

Heidi Pahl noted that although the Census Bureau revised estimate shows fewer questionnaires being completed via telephone and more questionnaires being completed via personal visit, the Census Bureau is confident they will stay within the budgeted amount.

Norris Nordvold asked why the UAAs for city of Phoenix from the 2005 Census Survey are so much higher in number than the UAAs for city of Phoenix from Census 2000. Mr. Nordvold also requested a detailed breakdown of UAAs for the city of Phoenix. Heidi Pahl said the Census Bureau does not have UAA data from census 2000 at the city level and therefore does not have it for city of Phoenix. She added that Phoenix may be comparing vacancy rates to UAA rates. Dawn Nelson replied that the Census Bureau would look into providing Phoenix a breakdown of the UAAs.

Mark Fooks asked which city has the highest mail return rate for the 2005 Census Survey. Heidi Pahl replied Litchfield Park with a 74% mail return rate. She distributed the 2005 Census Survey mail return rates as of 10/11/05.

Sonny Culbreth asked if caller identification, privacy detectors and cell phones were making it difficult to get responses to the telephone interviews being conducted by the Census Bureau. Dawn Nelson responded that the Census Telephone Center has found that it is taking more calls to get a completed interview and that about 40 percent of all calls are being 100 percent resolved. Ms. Nelson said that the Census Bureau is optimistic that the publicity effort is helping the telephone interviewers to complete the questionnaire with the household respondent. Richard Ning added that Census enumerators in the field are busy with personal visits and as of close of business October 17th, the field division had 6,800 completed personal visit interviews that were checked in. He said that

work is flowing to the field staff on a daily basis and they have about 30,000 cases as of October 18th.

Norris Nordvold asked what percent of Census enumerators are bilingual in Spanish and English. Jay Occhiogrosso replied that there are 30 bilingual enumerators in English and Spanish, and even more are being trained.

Heidi Pahl mentioned that since the mail return phase is nearing completion it would be good to get a report on the status of the telephone and personal visit progress at future CSOS meetings.

Norris Nordvold asked if the Census Bureau was still receiving mail returns. Dawn Nelson responded yes, in fact about 800 mail returns were received October 17th.

Duncan Miller asked if the Census enumerators in the field are fully recognizable as official Census Bureau employees. Jay Occhiogrosso replied that every Census worker wears a badge and a placard in their vehicle. He said that if a person has questions or problems they can call the Local Census Office at (602) 256-3225. Richard Ning added that there are other Census surveys ongoing each month. George Pettit asked for confirmation that the Census enumerators would have some sort of credentials to identify themselves. Jay Occhiogrosso responded yes.

6. Progress Reports

Heidi Pahl said the Census Bureau is tracking return rates of the 2005 Census Survey mail questionnaire. She noted that weekly progress reports by census tract for each jurisdiction are provided to CSOS with a copy to Population Technical Advisory Committee members and Census Survey Outreach Group members. She said the next progress report would be e-mailed October 19th. She noted that the Census Bureau will also be providing progress reports for telephone and personal visit follow-up.

7. Subcommittees

Norris Nordvold said that the business subcommittee fundraising effort is now complete. He mentioned that city of Phoenix did a second push for the faith based community. Mr. Nordvold said that 75,000 door hangers have been distributed, by cadets, to areas that had low return rates of the mail questionnaire. He said that the 40 foot Census thermometer is up on at corner of 7th Street and Washington on Civic Plaza Garage. He said that the mercury in the thermometer is now at 51% mail return rate for Phoenix. He added that the thermometer can be used for media photos. He noted that there has been a lot of outreach with the neighborhoods and schools. He also mentioned that Phoenix staff have been attending a variety of minority events such as the Asian festival, Moon festival, and Pakistini festival to get the word out about the Census Survey.

8. Census Outreach

Kelly Taft distributed news clips of media coverage received since the September CSOS meeting.

Kelly Taft mentioned that the Census Survey Outreach Group held what they expect will be their final meeting October 11, 2005. She noted that this will probably be her last update unless something arises. She added that cities should continue to do everything they can to promote the Census in a final push to increase mail return rates.

Kelly Taft mentioned, on behalf of the city of Phoenix, that Radio Campesina is willing to do Census related interviews every Monday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. They are located just west of 35th Avenue & Thomas. Anyone who speaks Spanish can participate, it's a great opportunity to promote the survey in the minority media. She said that Phoenix has also arranged with Food City to distribute Census information - if you have a Food City in your neighborhood contact David Ramirez at the city of Phoenix and he will put you in touch with the Food City contact.

Kelly Taft said that many cities are continuing to run Census public service announcements (PSAs), including the updated PSAs that the City of Phoenix provided.

Kelly Taft said that media coverage continues to be steady, with a number of editorials focusing on the need to increase survey returns. Kelly Taft noted that MAG continues to stress to the media the importance of this effort to communities and that residents can still fill out the questionnaire and return it or provide the information during the follow-up by the Census Bureau.

Kelly Taft noted that information continues to be distributed at special events across the Valley - many cities have GAIN (Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods) events planned for this month where they are going to distribute Census information. Avondale is hosting Billy Moore Days October 22nd where they are going to feature Census information and they are borrowing the Census Dolls from Phoenix. City of Scottsdale held a Hispanic community celebration October 1st where they provided Census materials, and also distributed 36,000 door hangers.

Kelly Taft said that MAG participated in a booth in Guadalupe where we passed out Spanish brochures, water bottles and beach balls. She added that MAG also participated in the Native American Pow Wow, the National Hispanic Women's Conference, and Glendale Fiesta.

Kelly Taft said that Census posters continue to be featured at many city libraries and locations.

Kelly Taft thanked the members of CSOS for their support, assistance and guidance throughout the Census Survey process.

Sonny Culbreth thanked city of Phoenix for their extensive region-wide media campaign, saying it has definitely helped Litchfield Park.

George Pettit thanked Jay Occhiogrosso for all his hard work at the Local Census Office. Mr. Pettit also thanked Heidi Pahl for coordinating this Census effort.

9. Meeting Schedule

George Pettit confirmed that the next Census Survey Oversight Subcommittee meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 15, 2005 at 10:30 a.m. in the MAG Saguaro room.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:12 a.m.